

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The examiner has required Applicant to elect a single species for prosecution on the merits. Applicant hereby elects Group II) Figures 5A-B, and claims 3 and 7 are readable thereon.

Claim 3 has been amended and rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-2, 4-6 and 8-9 have been canceled.

The title of the application has been amended.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 11, second paragraph. Claims 1 and 9 have been canceled.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maruyama et al. (U.S. Patent 5,769,236). Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hikita (U.S. Patent 6,404,181). Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yoshio (Japan Patent Abstract 07165260). Claim 1-2, 4-6, and 8 have been canceled. Claim 3 has been amended and rewritten in independent form. For at least the following reasons, the examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

Maruyama, Hikita, and Yoshio do not disclose or teach "the first connecting portion of the second tape-like member and the second connecting portion of the first tape-like member are formed by coupling a locking member attachment and a locked member attachment respectively at the end portions of the tape-like members" as recited in claim 3.

Maruyama discloses coupling projections 4a and coupling holes 4b. Maruyama does not disclose or teach that the coupling projection 4a is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the component holder. Maruyama also does not disclose or teach that the coupling hole 4b is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the component holder. Therefore, Maruyama

does not disclose or teach all the elements of the claimed invention.

Hikita discloses an engagement projection 12 and a coupling hole 14. Hikita does not disclose or teach that the engagement projection 12 is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the component holder. Hikita also does not disclose or teach that the coupling hole 14 is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the component holder. Therefore, Hikita does not disclose or teach all the elements of the claimed invention.

Yoshio discloses a cutout part K and a complementary connecting structure. Yoshio does not disclose or teach that the cutout part K is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the carrier tape piece. Yoshio also does not disclose or teach that the complementary connecting structure is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the carrier tape piece. Therefore, Yoshio does not disclose or teach all the elements of the claimed invention.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Engl (DE 3311634) in view of either one of Litt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,414,123) and Busler (U.S. Patent No. 3,431,548). Claim 1-2, 4-6, and 8 have been canceled. Claim 3 has been amended and rewritten in independent form. For at least the following reasons, the examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the references disclose or suggest "the first connecting portion of the second tape-like member and the second connecting portion of the first tape-like member are formed by coupling a locking member attachment and a locked member attachment respectively at the end portions of the tape-like members" as recited in claim 3.

Engl discloses an additional strip part 8 that joins two belt ends 9, 10 together. Engl does not disclose or suggest a first connecting portion that is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the belt. Engl also does not disclose or suggest a second connecting portion that is formed by coupling a member attachment at the end portion of the belt. Neither Litt nor Busler overcome the deficiencies of the Engl reference. Litt and Busler do not disclose or suggest first and second connecting portions that are formed by coupling member attachments at the end portions of the belt sections. Therefore, even if combined, the references do not disclose or suggest all the elements of the claimed

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invention.

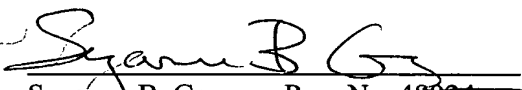
In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 36261.

Respectfully submitted,

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